REMARKS

UPON THE

REPORT OF A PEACE.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING.]

REMARKS

UPON THE

REPORT OF A PEACE,

IN CONSEQUENCE OF

Mr. Secretary TOWNSHEND's Letter

TO THE

LORD MAYOR OF LONDON,
BANK DIRECTORS, &c.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE

DEFENCE OF THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

16.

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TO

BOTH HOUSES

OF

PARLIAMENT.

AMERICA has obtained her end, ſhe *muſt* be independent. The object of France is in a great meaſure atchieved. She has torn away from England her valuable territories in the Weſt, diminiſhed her military character, outſhone her in the arts of humanity, ſunk her conſequence among the nations, loaded her with near one hundred millions of additional debt, ſevered from her the

nobleſt continent that ever formed an appendage of empire, and all with a rapidneſs unprecedented in the annals of events. Still ſhe has more to accompliſh, but her allies pant for peace. America is ſaid to have ordered her ambaſſador at Paris to accelerate pacification, and the report is credible. Not that I ſuſpect America of ingratitude. France has been generous, and America is not inſenſible. But her diſtreſſes are grievous, and to reſt a while muſt be her eſpecial deſire, as it is indeed the natural wiſh of each party. Negotiations are going forward, and the Engliſh parliament is prorogued for ten days. The nation is made acquainted with this event by the following letter to the Lord Mayor of London, the Bank Directors, &c.

To the Right Hon. the LORD MAYOR
of the CITY *of* LONDON.

My Lord,

HIS Majeſty's miniſters, anxious to prevent, as early as poſſible, the miſchief too common reſulting from ſpeculations in the funds during the uncertain ſtate of negotiations for peace with the powers at war, and which it is for the general honour and intereſt of all great powers to avoid, have thought it their duty to aſk his Majeſty's permiſſion to communicate to you, for the information of the public, that the negotiations for peace, which are carrying on at Paris, are brought ſo far to a point, as to promiſe a deciſive concluſion for peace or war, before the meeting of parliament, which will, on that account, be prorogued to the 5th of next month.

I have likewiſe his Majeſty's command to aſſure your Lordſhip, you will receive immediate notice of the iſſue.

I have the honour to be, &c.

T. TOWNSHEND.

Such is the letter—The moſt curious epiſtle, I will venture to ſay, that ever infuſed curioſity into the minds of mankind. It partakes of four natures. It is Lacedemonian, Hibernian, Venetian, and Carthaginian. It is Lacedemonian in brevity, and Hibernian in accuracy. Mr. Towſhnend is the right owner of theſe two virtues. No man can read the letter without having in the mind's eye, his collected reaſoning, his well conducted climax, his deciſive eloquence. The author lives in every line. Its Venetian and Punic merits claim the Firſt Lord of the

the Treaſury for a parent. It is a principle in the government of Venice to debauch the people. Since the days of Claudius (who wrote a treatiſe upon hazard) there never was ſo effectual a ſummons to profligacy as this very letter. It ſets the whole country a-gambling. All concerns for the ſtate are inveloped in the zeal for betting. The miniſter may be his own maſter in this univerſal ſuſpenſe, this general anxiety. He has intoxicated the whole nation; and, like a ſordid courtezan, he may rifle the pockets, after debauching the ſenſes of his victim. But if the Venetian qualities of the letter did not emphatically vouch for the Earl of Shelburne, its Punic ſubtilty puts its ſecond parent out of all queſtion.

This letter is above all kindred. Like Magna Charta, like the miracles of the apoſtles, like the incarnation, it ſtands by itſelf,—a ſupreme tranſaction,—unprecedented, original, and unaſſimilating!

I ſhall not follow the letter further. It has not eſcaped the wit even of the Common Council, and ſcarce an Alderman who has not hammered out ſome drole thing in contempt of the Secretary of State's epiſtle. The doubts entertained, that there has been any fact whatever for its foundation, are more worthy of conſideration.

A ſceptical genius has certainly an infinite reſource in the Earl of Shelburne. There is a fecundity in his political rogueries which furniſhes eternal food for ſpeculation. His character

does

does unqueſtionably countenance a ſuſpicion of fallacy in all tranſactions of which he is an agent, and the unlimited ſubtilty of the Noble Lord has induced the world to imagine that he has no hopes of a peace, that he wanted time to ſtrengthen himſelf in parliament, and that he has adopted this expedient as the laſt deſperate ſtratagem of miniſterial chicane. He has plagued Lord North to join him certainly. Through all his misfortunes and errors, I think there was ſomething diſcoverable in Lord North, which militates againſt a belief that he could be ſo deſtitute of manlineſs, ſo politically deſpicable, ſo perſonally contemptible, as to join in ſupport of the Earl of Shelburne's adminiſtration. A private gentleman would be kicked out of company for enduring half the vulgar

abuſe

abuſe which Lord North bore from the Earl of Shelburne, ſhielded by the freedom of debate and the ſanctity of ſituation. Taking it for granted, that no human being can be ſo much his own enemy as that Lord North ſhould ever unite with the Earl of Shelburne, what is the world to think of this very Earl of Shelburne, who ſolicits his ſupport? I will ſuppoſe, for argument's ſake, that Lord North does not much exceed the Earl of Shelburne either in talents or virtues, what muſt be the ſenſe of mankind as to the Noble Earl? Will the moſt phlegmatic man upon earth heſitate to pronounce him the moſt conſummate of all wretched hypocrites, who for fourteen years reprobated every meaſure of Lord North —pronounced him in principle and practice the moſt pernicious miniſter that ever ſat in the Britiſh cabinet—

yet

yet immediately crouches for ſupport to him, when his own perfidy forces from the royal council the men, thro' whom alone he could ever gain admiſſion to the king's cabinet.

What ſophiſtry can palliate this proceeding? It is a direct and palpable inſult to parliament. The Houſe of Commons is pledged to the nation againſt the old miniſtry. Their Journals would at this hour exhibit a ſolemn proſcription of the North adminiſtration, had the Earl of Surry made his motion. Perſonal delicacy much more than political judgment prevented him. But where is the neceſſity for a formal record in a tranſaction of yeſterday? Every man remembers it. That miniſtry was overturned by the majority of the Houſe of Commons, and the applauſe

of the people ſanctified the virtue of their repreſentatives. I truſt there are limits to political infamy. It is not in parliamentary baſeneſs—it is not in civil turpitude that the ſame Houſe of Commons can ſupport an adminiſtration reprobated by themſelves in terms ſo emphatical. But how ſtands it with thoſe of the preſent cabinet, who *could not*, without covering themſelves in an indelible diſgrace, meet the old miniſtry in council? They have committed themſelves long ſince. Every man in this country knows how they ſhould act, and as their public declarations have furniſhed ample inſtruments of adjudication, I ſhould wait for their public conduct if I did not feel, and was not convinced that the whole nation thinks as I do, that the Earl of Shelburne's *attempt* to call into power the men who ſtand virtually incapacitated by

parlia-

parliament (and who as yet * have had

* Lord North's friends had, in conſequence of a freſh overture from Lord Shelburne, a meeting three or four days ſince. That Jackall of every adminiſtration, that ſlave of ſlavery, that bawd of political proſtitution, *the old Rat*, after confeſſing that Lord Shelburne was a miniſter in whom no perſon could confide, had the groſſneſs to propoſe, notwithſtanding, that they ſhould go to the Cockpit. The propoſal was inſtanrly ſcouted by Lord North and his real friends. Lord Nugent is not the friend of any man. He has deſtroyed the political character of his once amiable ſon-in-law for ever. He corrupted him at the time of his marriage to ſuch a degree, that Lord Temple ſaid in the Houſe of Commons in May 1775, 'That he hoped he ſhould never differ in any thing from Lord North.' And yet he was his open enemy in leſs than two years. Who can wonder that he ſhould degrade himſelf by being Lord Lieutenant of Ireland under the Earl of Shelburne. I do not impeach Lord Temple's heart, but I believe theſe facts will give no extravagant idea of the ſagacity of his head.

the ſpirit to deſpiſe him) called, in the moſt forcible language, upon each of the right honorable perſonages I allude to, inſtantly to quit the adminiſtration.

To you, Mr. Pitt, I addreſs myſelf in particular, I reſpect your talents, and I reverence your name. You ſaid, that your whig colleagues were not bound to follow Mr. Fox, until there appeared to be in the miniſter a deſertion of that ſyſtem of principles which conſtituted the baſis of the Rockingham adminiſtration. I affirm, that there cannot be a more palpable deſertion of that ſyſtem than in the efforts to recall the old ſervants of the crown into power. This event demonſtrates every argument of Mr. Fox on the 9th of July. All his ſuſpicions are eſtabliſhed. Every prediction

diction is verified. Lord Shelburne ſolicits the political alliance of Lord North, and yet Mr. Pitt is chancellor of the exchequer. Glutton of mock power! What ſhall remain for maturer years, for riper reaſon, if thy devouring youth ſhall ſwallow all, and leave no reliſh for the virtuous enjoyment of a future ſeaſon! I demand of you the juſtice due to your family, to your character, to your abilities. But if avarice has hardened your heart. If pomp and pageantry have infected your head. If you are dead to the noble incitements of *honeſt* ambition, this much I do prophecy, that you will have leſs to conſole you in the future miſery which muſt infallibly await you, than any man living—You begun the world with the nobleſt proſpects, and nothing could ruin you but yourſelf.

Strongly

Strongly then as the Earl of Shelburne's character induces a ſuſpicion of all his actions, I profeſs myſelf, notwithſtanding, entirely confident of his ſincerity upon the preſent occaſion. It is true, that his political diſſolution muſt have ſucceeded a negative upon the addreſs. And it is barely poſſible, that this negotiation for peace might be a bugbear merely to amuſe the people, while he procured an acceſſion of parliamentary ſupport ſufficient to combat his enemies. But it is perfectly improbable. Such a juggle upon the national underſtanding, ſuch an inſult upon the national dignity, is not in the whole ſcope of miniſterial manœuvreing, in the wideſt extent of political daring. The Earl of Shelburne knows too well that ſuch an audacity muſt inſtantly diſſolve all his power, and conſign him

him to perpetual infamy. It is not an appeal to public pride, to national courage—No ſpecious relation of the exorbitant terms demanded by the enemy that could ſecure him. No talents could vindicate, no ſophiſtry could gloſs over ſo monſtrous an impudence. That he will meet Parliament with a peace I have no doubt, and to *that* chiefly ſhall the remainder of this addreſs be devoted.

I have in another publication ſaid, that the Earl of Shelburne would forget his own nature to procure a majority in Parliament; and the peace which he has obtained (for I muſt take it for granted) completely verifies my aſſertion. Peace is not more the wiſh than it is the intereſt of this country; and I affirm, that the man in the Britiſh empire who ſhould not be

be happy in ſo bleſſed an event is the Earl of Shelburne, and *the Earl of Shelburne only*.

I aſſert, that the ſalvation of England muſt be the deſtruction of his reputation; and that his character can only be ſecured in the ruin of his country. They are totally inconſiſtent, and not capable of being combined together by any poſſible modification of circumſtances. If I am only a declaimer, let contempt follow me. If I prove, let me prove to ſome effect.

The retreat of Mr. Fox, the Duke of Portland, Lord Cavendiſh, Mr. Burke, &c. grew every day more popular. The Earl of Shelburne found the long receſs inadequate to the end of procuring parliamentary ſupport. He was active,

though

though ineffectual, and terrified at the thoughts of thus meeting the legiſlature as a war miniſter, he ſues in earneſt for peace; abandons all his ſchemes, plans, projects, principles; and ſooner than part with power, he delivers himſelf up to the moſt aggravated circumſtances of perſonal diſgrace. This nation is indebted for a peace only to his deſperate fortune. War was his object; and nothing but the paltry fear of loſing his power could induce him to give this miſerable country a ceſſation from expence and ſlaughter. Every man knows the vacancy, the coldneſs, the doubt, the diffidence, the indeciſion that prevailed in the Cabinet, during the laſt four months. This man's ſenſe of pride, and that man's ſenſe of ſhame. The fear of ridicule, the dread of infamy. Never was aſſembly ſo agi-

tated by ſtrange and contradictory emotions. To quiet this inſurrection of the mind, the Earl of Shelburne yields at length to peace *, as the laſt deſperate expedient of preſerving his power.

If

* That war was his object, and that peace is only an inſtrument of influence, I believe no man doubts. Several offers of German troops were made in the courſe of the ſummer to General Conway. German troops and American war were ſynonimous terms to the General. The very ſound threw him into a hectic. Upon recovering himſelf he always ſent the applicants to Lord Shelburne. No offer was rejected. The pitiful craft of adopting private hints was carefully attended to, and General Faucitt is now recruiting in Lower Germany. No miniſter, but a blunderer like Lord Shelburne, could ſend to Lower Germany for troops. The only military magazine is Upper Germany. I

ſpeak

If this poor country gets a peace, ſhe owes that beſt of bleſſings to the adminiſtration which begun in April and ended in July. Human ſkill (without bribing the councils of the enemy) cannot accompliſh the peace of England by any other means than thoſe pointed out by Mr. Fox. The world is at this moment ignorant of the terms, yet I will take

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ſpeak from authority, when I ſay that he cannot get a thouſand men from Heſſe Caſſel. The Duke of Brunſwick deteſts the Engliſh miniſter, and he is juſt as unable as unwilling to furniſh troops for this country. Anſpach cannot ſpare three hundred men, and perhaps he may procure a few recruits in Hannau, half of whom will deſert before they can be thipped for England. Thus ſtands the Earl of Shelburne as to German allies and continental reſources. Yet he has talked of carrying on the war in boaſting language.

upon me to aſſert, that peace cannot be procured otherwiſe than by the adoption of the doctrines of that miniſter whom Lord Shelburne forced from the ſervice of his king.

This country has derived more conſtitutional benefit, more national felicity, from that ſhort miniſtry of three months, than from all the adminiſtrations of the laſt twenty years conjointly. The lamentable misfortune of its diſſolution is felt more forcibly every day. All the world confeſſed its virtue and wiſdom. One of the ableſt men in Europe, and, from partial motives, its direct enemy *, acknowledged that England was never governed by ſo great an adminiſtration.

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* Mr. Flood.

Yet this tower of ſtrength, this fabric of beauty, this temple of conſtitutional ſoundneſs was demoliſhed at once by the deteſtable avarice, for I cannot dignify his guilt by calling it the ambition of the Earl of Shelburne. It was an avarice of the moſt ſordid quality, of power and emolument, paltry, pitiful, and pernicious. Judge of him by his deeds. He dares not come to parliament after the events of this week without a peace. It is not in human boldneſs that he ſhould. And what will mankind think of him when he comes into parliament to ratify the terms which Mr. Fox pronounced five months ago, as indiſpenſable to the peace of England, and which this moon-calf miniſter reprobated at the very ſame moment. If, in private life, a private man were to perpetrate an act of this kind; if he were to hold up the art and the artiſt as obnoxious and abominable; if

by

by placing himſelf exactly in his ſituation, he were to plunder the artiſt of his fame, and rob him of the profits of his genius, would not all the world in one voice cry out, that ſuch a miſcreant ſhould be expelled the ſociety of honeſt men? And is the firſt ſphere of human action, the government of ſtates to be ſo degraded, that all diſtinction between truth and falſehood, between honor and baſeneſs, is to be utterly aboliſhed!—Is vice to riſe upon the ruin of virtue, ſupported on the one ſide by political wickedneſs, and upon the other by moral infamy!

Mr. Fox ſaid no peace could be expected without giving independence to America. The Earl of Shelburne aſſerted, 'that 'the ſun of Britain was ſet that day 'America was declared independent by 'the Engliſh legiſlature; that it muſt be 'wrote

‘ wrote in blood, and that the miniſter
‘ who recognized it muſt be a traitor.’

I take the fact of his making a peace for granted. He muſt bring it to Parliament, or his utter ruin follows upon the firſt day of meeting. I ſay then that he muſt give Independence to America. He muſt. He muſt. Come forth, thou miniſter of fatal preſcience ! Come forth, thou prophet of thy own diſgrace ! Come forth ſelf-blaſted, and be that very Traitor you foreſaw !

Twice in his life, and only twice, has the Earl of Shelburne foretold events with a magical veracity. Upon the firſt day of the laſt ſeſſions of parliament, he ſaid in the Houſe of Lords, and I am very accurate in his words: “ That if ever he ſhould ſhew himſelf “ a rogue, he ſhould ſhew himſelf an “ able

" able rogue, and perform ſome act
" ſufficiently important to bear up
" his perfidy, and give a ſort of luſtre
" to an act of turpitude."

This is a principle of his Deity Machiavel. Great vices become a great miniſter. Let my reader reflect upon his conduct to his colleagues laſt July, and judge if he has not realized his doctrine moſt ſpiritedly. In the other reſpect, ' that the miniſter who declared America independent muſt be a traitor,' the fidelity of his prediction is wonderful, and for ought I know, as fate has placed her finger upon him, the whole ſentence may be confirmed, " It *may* be wrote in blood,"—but not, I truſt, in the blood of Britiſh ſoldiers and Britiſh ſailors, who in this tide of times, throughout a diſaſtrous and deteſtable war, have gallantly

ſup-

ſupported their own honor, although they could not from domeſtic miſmanagement, and the accumulation of oppoſing calamities, ſecure their country from misfortune and diſgrace.

It *may* be wrote in blood! and therefore let the miniſter look to the terms of pacification. The peace of Paris has rouſed the nation into watchmen. They will not be ſacrificed again. The firſt feature of negotiation is to aſk more than is reaſonable, and more than is expected. When we hear that France has demanded Canada, and to be placed in the Eaſt-Indies upon the very footing ſhe ſtood before the laſt war: that Spain has demanded Gibraltar and Jamaica: that Holland expects a reſtitution of all her captured territories, and an indemnification for her expences during the war: we liſten only

to laugh. If the miniſter goes farther than acknowledging the independence, and equalizing conceſſions to France between the Eaſt and Weſt Indies, let him indeed tremble, leſt his evil genius has put words into his mouth, which may burſt upon himſelf in images of horror.

It is his Majeſty's greateſt misfortune, that his favorite miniſters have been moſt fatal to his perſonal honor. The Earl of Shelburne has, on the 11th of July, made the Royal lips ſpeak in triumphant language of his ſucceſſes in the Weſt and Eaſt Indies, and he concludes with declaring to his parliament, *that he has the ſatisfaction to inform them, that he ſees no reaſon which ſhould induce him to accept of leſs than fair and reaſonable terms of pacification.*

Military and commercial events have operated in our favor ſince the above period,

riod. Our trade has arrived without injury from the enemy. We have relieved Gibraltar. We have fought battles with honor and effect. Yet I affirm, that the Earl of Shelburne *cannot obtain fair and reaſonable terms of pacification.* Theſe words were knit into the Royal ſpeech as an overture to that fatal opera, the American war. He has been unſucceſsful in his efforts for parliamentary ſupport during the receſs, and enters now upon treaties for peace, as the laſt prop of expiring authority. I cannot mention that ſentiment too often. Not content with overwhelming himſelf in diſgrace, he involves his ſovereign in a ſimilar dilemma. The noble Earl may quibble upon, and Lord Aſhburton may refine down, the expreſſions, *fair and reaſonable terms of pacification.* But the people of England are no ſophiſts. They underſtand plain language as well as the miniſter.

The interpretation of the Royal words is, that he will accept of no terms that ſhall ſoak up the intereſt, or impair the honor of the empire. The nation expects *this*, and woe be to the miniſter who attempts to deceive the nation at this criſis. I entirely forego the popular ſuſpicion, that the Earl of Shelburne has no real expectation of peace,—that he has poſtponed the buſineſs of the empire only to collect together the ſcattered fragments of that maſs of parliamentary knights errant, who are ready to fight for any maſter, and who have not lately appeared in the Campus Martius of corruption. I value the peace of the nation too much to ſpeak of the events which muſt infallibly ſucceed the detection of ſuch a plot. No—it is impoſſible ſo groſs an outrage ſhould be attempted.

The King muſt meet the Parliament with a peace, or he loſes his miniſter

miniſter the very firſt day of the ſeſſions. Never was ſituation ſo dreadful as that of the Earl of Shelburne. If he makes a bad peace, he ſtamps a falſehood upon the royal perſon; and the very beſt peace he can make cannot prevent the total annihilation of his own character. In what a lamentable predicament ſtand the people of England! Their councils are led by a miniſter, who, to retain his own power, has no choice but between the ruin of his own character and the deſtruction of his country. Deſperate alternative!

Yet ſurely the peace of this empire were cheaply purchaſed in the ſacrifice of Lord Shelburne's perſonal fame, and he is the only man in England who ſhould regret a peace; for no

peace

peace can ſecure him from diſgrace. Diamonds are cut in their own duſt; but there are other minerals that periſh in their own poiſon. Mr. Yorke died to reſtore his honor, and he ſucceeded. So detached and ſingled out from every other political misfortune, is the misfortune of the Earl of Shelburne, that even a ſelf-devotion could ſcarcely redeem his reputation. Yet, if I were in his condition, I ſhould prefer the ethics of Paſſeran * to thoſe of St. Paul.

I write at a moment when the public mind is agitated with uncommon emotion. The report is faſtening it-

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* An author of a book in defence of ſuicide.

ſelf every hour, that the Earl of Shelburue poſtponed the Parliamet only to ſtrengthen himſelf. I will not believe it. He knows it could not be endured. If his miniſtry were to ſurvive the diſcovery of ſo unmatched an audacity a ſingle day, an honeſt man might as well ſubmit to the tyranny of Turkey as the boaſted government of England.

In either caſe I portend his downfall. Peace deſtroys himſelf, and war deſtroys his country. Of all the high roads and winding alleys of Britiſh politics no paſſage is ſecure to the Earl of Shelburne. He muſt be undone. His laſt is one of his worſt acts. Not the eaſe of ſolitude, nor all the graces of his amiable Counteſs,

can

can ſupply a conſolation Even to his retreat the execration of thouſands of families ſhall follow him, deſtroyed and deſtroying at this moment by the public gambling which his letter to the city, as ridiculous in itſelf as abominable in its effects, has occaſioned.

England has been often preſerved by events that were miraculous, and Providence ſeems to have interpoſed in the preſent caſe. It is not more for the ſafety of the Britiſh conſtitution, than for the intereſt of virtue, that the Earl of Shelburne ſhould ſtand in his preſent predicament. The juſtice of the Almighty never operates to ſo uſeful an example as when it makes the bad deeds of bad men the inſtruments of their own puniſhment. If trick were to proſper above truth, if falſhood were to flouriſh upon the ruins

ruins of fidelity, if the barriers between infamy and honor were to be demoliſhed, if virtue were carted and expelled from human commerce, if vice were elevated to the golden tribunal, and mankind were led in her chains, what is there valuable in exiſtence? It is for the honor of humanity that artifice and fraud ſhould defeat themſelves, and that the violation of private faith and public principle ſhould be not only unſucceſsful, but branded with general deteſtation.

Future miniſters may learn from the Earl of Shelburne, that their beſt reliance ſhould be in honorable dealing, and his fate may extend to ſtateſmen that vulgar valuable truth, that fundamental principle of all good morals, "*honeſty is the beſt policy*."

The reader will pardon the liberty of my ſaying one word of myſelf. I

write neither from private reſentments, nor partial incitements. Public motives are my only impulſe. I ſhould abhor the man in little life, who acted upon the Earl of Shelburne's maxims. *His* guilt is magnified by the univerſality of its effects. The evil comes home to every man. If my humble, though earneſt efforts, ſhall in any degree contribute to the demolition of that fatal ſyſtem which he adopted and even now pants to accompliſh, the conſideration will make me happy: and it will be one of the beſt ſatisfactions of my life, to have aſſiſted in plucking down the periſhable wreaths of triumphant treachery.

Nov. 30, 1782.

FINIS.

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